



MICHIGAN HOUSE REPUBLICANS

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Rep. Laura Cox testimony on HB 4740

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the members of the committee.

I come before you today to speak in favor of legislation that I introduced in an effort to make a safer environment for firefighters, who risk their lives to ensure that we stay safe during fires that can strike at any time.

In a moment, I'd like to show you a video that hits close to home. In 2012, there was a fire at a small commercial building in Dearborn, Michigan. In this video, three firemen from the Dearborn Fire Department were on the roof of the business while the inside was ablaze. In an effort to create ventilation, one of the firefighters used a chainsaw to cut a hole in the roof. The firefighter's goal in creating this hole was to create a vent that would allow for heat to escape. Without a vent, closed fires can reach temperatures that exceed 1,000 degrees, and turn firehose water into steam almost immediately.

As the fireman began to cut into the roof to ventilate the fire, it collapsed. This roof was created with lightweight materials that have been proven to burn and fail at a much faster rate than their heavier counterparts. The firefighter, who was saved by his colleagues, nearly fell into the structure below which would have had potentially deadly consequences. However, thanks to quick-thinking and proper teamwork, all three of the firemen were safe from harm.

[SHOW VIDEO]

If my proposed legislation were law, these local heroes would have had better information at hand to be able to save others while staying safe themselves.

Although this was merely a close call, many firemen have not been as lucky and have lost life and limb falling through the roofs and floors of these burning buildings.

In my home city of Livonia, Paul DeNapoli serves as the director of Fire Science at Madonna University, and retired from the Livonia Fire and Rescue force not long ago. Mr. DeNapoli brought this issue to my attention after studying similar law that has been passed at the local level in states such as Florida and California.

This is a simple, common-sense solution that will provide firefighters with pertinent information that will better protect them from the dangers they face in every fire they fight. I've brought with me today an example of a placard that can be used. As you can see it is very small, lightweight, and inexpensive.

When firefighters come to smother a fire in our communities, we have a duty to do everything we can as citizens to ensure their safety. This legislation aims to provide an additional layer of protection and safety for firefighters across the state. These placards will give enough information to our local heroes so that they are able to better protect their own lives in addition to ours. Colleagues, I ask that you join me in supporting House Bill 4740.

Thank you for your time.